

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BANGKO 14898 230923Z

20

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 AID-05 AGR-05 DODE-00 IGA-01 /054 W

----- 032242

R 230803Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 8254

COMUSMACTHAI

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 14898

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, LA

SUBJ: SHIPMENT OF RICE TO LAOS

REF: A. BANGKOK 14547

B. USDAO VIENTIANE 220925Z JUL 75

C. BANGKOK 14717

1. REF B ASKED WHETHER THE THAI HAVE NOW APPROVED EXEMPTION TO THE CUSTOMS EXPORT TAX OF US-PURCHASED RICE FOR LAOS. AS OF COB JULY 22, THE PROTOCOL DEPARTMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MFA) HAD NOT YET RECEIVED A LETTER FROM THE UNDER SECRETARY'S OFFICE AUTHORIZING THE EXEMPTION, BUT THE AMBASSADOR'S JULY 21 CONVERSATION WITH THE UNDER SECRETARY INDICATED THAT THE LETTER WAS ON THE WAY (REF C). A PROTOCOL OFFICIAL TELLS US THAT HE HAS DELIBERATELY NOT RAISED THE ISSUE OF QUANTITY OF RICE IN SEEKING THE MFA POLITICAL DEPARTMENT'S APPROVAL FOR THE EXEMPTION. WE ASSUME, BUT CANNOT GUARANTEE, THAT THE UNDER SECRETARY WILL TAKE A POLICY STAND ON RELEASING ALL RICE CURRENTLY AT ISSUE, RATHER THAN DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN THE LONG-STANDING REQUEST FOR 204 TONS (NOT 104 AS REPORTED IN REF A) AND THE RECENT ONE FOR 3,000.

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PAGE 02 BANGKO 14898 230923Z

2. THE RTG IS SHUTSOOWN FOR BUDBFIST LENT JULY 23

AND 24. SINCE THE 25TH FALLS ON A FRIDAY, MANY OFFICIALS
ARE TAKING FRENCH LEAVE THAT DAY, AND TURNING THE
OCCASION INTO A FIVE-DAY WEEKEND. WE MAY POSSIBLY
OBTAIN THE RELEASE JULY 25, BUT WOULD BET ON JULY
28 AS THE EARLIEST LIKELY DATE.

3. WE WILL NEVERTHELESS RENEW OUR QUERIES AT MFA
JULY 25. THE OUTLOOK FOR APPROVAL IS GOOD, BUT WE
CANNOT BE OPTIMISTIC ON THE TIMING.
WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

Message Attributes

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EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

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To: VIENTIANE
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